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Agenda item 110 (b)

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Malta, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovenia and Venezuela: draft resolution

Regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 32/127 of 16 December 1977 and all its subsequent resolutions concerning regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights,

Recalling also Commission on Human Rights resolution 1993/51 of 9 March 1993,

Bearing in mind the relevant resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights concerning advisory services in the field of human rights, including its most recent resolution on that subject, 1996/55 of 19 April 1996,

Bearing in mind also the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[1]

[1] Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/42 (Part I)), chap. III.

Reaffirming that regional arrangements play a fundamental role in promoting and protecting human rights and should reinforce universal human rights standards, as contained in international human rights instruments, and their protection,

Recalling that the World Conference on Human Rights reiterated the need to consider the possibility of establishing regional and subregional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights where they do not already exist,

Recalling also that the World Conference recommended that more resources should be made available for the strengthening or the establishment of regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights under the programmes of advisory services and technical assistance of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,[2]

Noting the progress achieved so far in the promotion and protection of human rights at the regional level under the auspices of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the regional intergovernmental organizations,

Noting the growing exchanges between the United Nations and the bodies created by the United Nations in accordance with the treaties dealing with human rights on the one hand and the intergovernmental regional organizations on the other in order to promote the mutual exchange of information between these bodies and the conclusion of regional arrangements for the promotion and the protection of human rights,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;

2. Welcomes the continuing cooperation and assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat in the further strengthening of the existing regional arrangements and regional machinery for the promotion and protection of human rights, in particular with regard to advisory services and technical assistance, public information and education, with a view to exchanging information and experience in the field of human rights;

3. Welcomes also, in that respect, the close cooperation of the High Commissioner and the Centre for Human Rights in the organization of regional and subregional training courses and workshops in the field of human rights, high-level government expert meetings and a regional conference of national human rights institutions, aiming at creating greater understanding of the promotion and protection of human rights issues in the regions, improving procedures and examining the various systems for the promotion and protection of the universally accepted human rights standards and at inviting States that have not yet done so to submit instruments of ratification, adhesion or succession to the principal international human rights bodies;

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[2] A/51/480.

4. Stresses the importance of the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights, and renews its appeal to all Governments to consider making use of the possibilities offered by the United Nations, under this programme, of organizing information or training courses at the national level for government personnel on the application of international human rights standards and the experience of relevant international bodies, and notes with satisfaction, in that respect, the establishment of technical cooperation projects with several Governments of the region of Asia and the Pacific;

5. Requests the Secretary-General, as foreseen in programme 35, Promotion and protection of human rights, of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997,[3] to continue to strengthen exchanges between the United Nations and regional intergovernmental organizations dealing with human rights;

6. Welcomes the growing exchanges between the High Commissioner and the Centre for Human Rights and several regional intergovernmental organizations, as well as between the bodies created by the United Nations in accordance with the treaties dealing with human rights and the Council of Europe;

7. Invites States in areas where regional arrangements in the field of human rights do not yet exist to consider concluding agreements with a view to the establishment within their respective regions of suitable regional machinery for the promotion and protection of human rights;

8. Requests the Commission on Human Rights to continue to pay special attention to the most appropriate ways of assisting, at their request, countries of the different regions under the programme of advisory services and to make, where necessary, relevant recommendations;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session a report on the state of regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights and to include therein the results of action taken in pursuance of the present resolution;

10. Decides to consider this question further at its fifty-third session.

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[3] See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/45/6/Rev.1), vol. II.